



Teapot

Date

19th to 20th Century

Primary Maker

Tibetan

Medium

Human bone, metal and turquoise

Description

This is a Tibetan teapot made from bone and silver. Human bone was traditionally used as a medium for a variety of Tibetan objects, particularly drinking ware. In Tibetan vernacular kapala means skull or skullcup, as the body part was often used to create cups. Monasteries use kapalas to symbolically hold bread and wine instead of flesh and blood as offerings to deities. In a few rare instances two kapalas were adjoined using silver to create more complex form such as teapots. Given the Western style of this object, it was assuredly made for a non-traditional function.

Dimensions

10 7/8 × 10 3/4 × 4 1/4 in. (27.6 × 27.3 × 10.8 cm)